

Scottsdale Housing Agency Quarterly



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A Newsletter of the City of Scottsdale's Community Assistance Office

Reporting Changes and Family Composition

It is your family obligation to report in writing ALL changes in your income **within 10 days** of the change. Failure to report changes can result in a payback agreement with the possibility of losing your housing assistance. The following **must** be reported

- 1) Unemployment benefits
 - 2) SSI or SSD
 - 3) Child support
 - 4) Alimony
 - 5) Employment
 - 6) Pension
 - 7) Welfare or other assistance
 - 8) Adding or removing family from the household.
- All income is verified at the time of reporting.
- For further assistance please call your Housing Specialist at 480-312-7717.*

Message from the Community Assistance Manager

In addition to receiving housing assistance, the Housing Choice Voucher Program provides the opportunity to participate in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program. FSS is a voluntary program that assists Scottsdale families receiving housing assistance to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency. Since the inception of the FSS Program in 1997, over 70 clients have participated in the program. We have had 27 participants graduate from the program; which means they have achieved all of their goals in their Individual Training and Service Plan. Our FSS staff will guide you to meet your goals through career counseling to obtain job training or assist you in seeking opportunities for higher education. Over half of our FSS participants go back to school, some receiving AA or BA degrees; one graduate even received a Masters Degree!

The most attractive component of FSS is the ability to build an

“escrow account.” As an FSS participant’s income increases, their rent portion increases and the Housing Agency’s portion decreases. This decrease is placed in an interest bearing escrow account, which is given to those who successfully complete their Service Plan goals. Over \$235, 000 has been disbursed in escrow funds to successful FSS graduates, about an average of \$8,700 per graduate.

A number of our graduates have bought a house using their FSS escrow and other funds available through the Community Assistance Office such as the CDBG First Time Homebuyers Program. Community Services of Arizona (CSA), a non-profit organization, is working with our office to help first-time homebuyers achieve homeownership. The program offers down payment and closing cost assistance up to \$25,000 to income eligible. Using the First Time

Homebuyers Program together with FSS Escrow funds goes a long way to buying that dream home.

For more information about our FSS Program, please call Sharon Stephenson (FSS Coordinator) at 480-312-7635. To enroll in a Homeownership Education class with CSA, call 480-899-8717 X201.

We are pleased to be able to serve you. We recognize your needs. We appreciate your efforts. We celebrate your successes.

Thank you,
Mark Bethel
Community Assistance
Manager

What's All The Talk About Mold?

The best way to deal with mold is to implement a preventive maintenance program to stop mold before it starts. If mold has already been found at your site or if residents are complaining of illnesses that may be mold-related, you need to get rid of the mold as quickly and effectively as possible. Steps to prevent or eliminate mold:

****Eliminate household water leaks.**

****Remove sheet rock, carpets and padding that have been flooded in the past.**

****Remove carpeting in bathrooms**

****Keep humidity level in the house below 50 percent.** The recommended cleaning for a number of different surfaces (including paper, wallpaper, carpet, concrete, and wood) either a wet vacuum or a spray

bottle of bleach and water solution. Please remember to report any leaks immediately as there is a 48-hour time frame to prevent the onset of mold.

For more information, please contact Jewel James, Housing Inspector at 480-312-7410.

Credit Reporting

Credit bureaus keep and report credit information about consumers. These files refer to any public records about the consumer, like tax liens, or other credit data. You have the right to inquire if information in your credit report is used against you. Name, address, and telephone number of the credit bureau providing the

related report must also be given to you. Some companies offer to help consumers "clean up" their credit history. Outdated or inaccurate data only can be removed. Negative information may not be legally removed. Credit repair companies are required to give you a detailed statement of your rights and a notice within three days that

allows you to cancel your contract. To receive a copy of your credit report contact: **Equifax at 1-800-997-2493** **Experian, 1-888-397-3742** or **Trans Union at 1-800-888-4213**

If you have any questions please contact Jewel James, Housing Inspector at 480-312-7410.

Information, Workshops and Services

VISTA DEL CAMINO CENTER. Community Legal Services (CLS) will present a series of FREE legal information workshops and advice. A lawyer will be there the second Thursday of every month from 9:30-11:30 a.m. to provide one-on-one advice on **Family Law** issues. Also, on Thursdays a **Divorce** workshop from 8:45-2:00 p.m. Sign up at the appointment desk. Be sure and bring any related leases, letters and paperwork with you if you are seeking legal advice. To schedule an appointment call 480-312-2323. **Resume & Job Readiness** workshops are offered every Thursday beginning June 5, 2003. Call Stacey at 312-0057 for details. **DES Representative**, available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday by appointment only. **Back To School Program**, enroll for clothing and school

supplies starting June 16 call Vista at 480-312-2323 for an appointment. Program is for K-12 – 12th grade only you and must be income eligible.

CIVIC CENTER SENIOR CENTER offers the following health services:

Blood Pressure Readings - are offered throughout the week. Please call 480-312-2375 for times and days.

Hearing Evaluations - provided on a monthly basis. Audiology and Hearing Aid Center - 2nd Tuesday of the month, 10-12 pm. Call 480-312-7702 to set up an appointment. **VALLEY CENTER OF THE DEAF** helps to locate hearing equipment to adapt to hearing loss.

Medi-Loan - The Civic Center Senior Center in conjunction with the Scottsdale Health

Council provides medical equipment such as canes, crutches, walkers, shower benches and wheel chairs to Scottsdale residents for a small monthly rental donation. Most items are \$5 per month, although wheelchairs are \$10. If you cannot afford the nominal donation, however, the fee can be waived. Call 480-312-7702 to learn if we have the medical equipment you need.

MARICOPA SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES Volunteers arrange free transportation service for seniors to travel to medical appointments. Call 623-934-4256 to make reservations for travel after medical appointments has been made. It is important to make reservations several days in advance.

Earned Income Disallowance for Persons with Disabilities

Under a recent HUD regulation, if you are disabled and previously unemployed, you may qualify for an earned income disallowance. If you begin working your earned income will not be included in your total family gross income. The following requirements need to be satisfied to qualify:

- Employment of a family member with disabilities and was previously unemployed for one or more years prior to employment.
- Increased income for a person with disabilities participating in any job training programs.
- New employment or increased income for a person with disabilities during or within 6 months after receiving assistance or benefits under state programs (TANF, Welfare.)

The disallowance begins on the date the qualified family member is employed or first experiences an increase in income due to employment. The full amount of increase is excluded, and the exclusion extends for a total of 12 months.

For more details contact your assigned Housing Specialist at 480-312-7717.

Reminder About Moving

When considering a move there are necessary steps to take. First you need to notify your Housing Specialist that you are planning to move and set up a moving appointment.

1. You must give a 30-day written notice to the current landlord and a copy to the Housing Agency.
2. A Moving Packet is issued for you and the landlord to complete and return to the Housing Specialist for the rent amount to be approved.
3. The unit must be empty during inspection and ALL utilities must be ON for the unit to pass inspection.
4. After the unit passes inspection, you may sign the Lease Agreement with your new landlord. You must not sign a Lease until the unit passes inspection.
5. Before you move in do your own walk-thru using the checklist in the Moving Packet, with the landlord if possible.

If the unit belongs to a Homeowners Association, request a copy of the rules and regulations. Ask who is responsible for the yard and/or pool maintenance? You are responsible for deposits required by the landlord. Make sure the lease rent is the same as on the Housing form, *Request For Tenancy Approval*. Your initial portion of the rent (Tenant Rent) cannot be higher than 40% of your adjusted monthly income.

Having your utilities disconnected due to nonpayment can result in being terminated from the program.

If you are planning to move out you will need to schedule an inspection with the landlord BEFORE you move out.

For any questions and to also consult your Housing Specialist for your limit on Tenant Rent please call 480-312-7717.

Scottsdale Housing Agency

7522 East First Street
Scottsdale, Arizona
85251

PHONE:
(480) 312-7717

FAX:
(480) 312-7761

INFO LINE:
(480) 312-2528

TDD:
(480) 312-7411

About Our Organization...

The Scottsdale Housing Agency helps provide affordable and safe housing for lower-income families, senior citizens, and disabled persons.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides housing assistance to eligible families by subsidizing

a portion of their rent. The Scottsdale Housing Agency pays a rental subsidy directly to the landlord each month under the Housing Assistance Payment Contract.

For more information on the Housing Choice Voucher Program please call (480) 312-7717.

It is the policy of the City of Scottsdale not to discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.

Persons with special needs for assistance in translation or reasonable accommodation should contact the Scottsdale Housing Agency at (480) 312-7717.

E-MAIL:
rschweitzer@
scottsdaleaz.gov

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.scottsdaleaz.gov

